of contracts etc., received from the Indian workers are also taken up by the Mission with the sponsors/employers, Labour Department and local police authorities for appropriate action.

In order to ensure the protection of rights of Indian workers by the host countries, Government of India has entered into bilateral labour MoUs with the UAE and Kuwait. An Additional protocol has been signed with Qatar. MoUs with Oman and Malaysia have been finalized.

Programme for emigrant workers

1101. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

whether Government has proposed to expand the pre-departure orientation and skill upgradation programme for emigrant workers to all State during this current year;

if so, the fmancial allocation of the Central Government to the State Governments and expected numbers of beneficiaries, State-wise;

if not, the reasons for not expanding this programme to all States; and

the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a)

Yes, Sir.

The proposed scheme envisages training of 1.60 lakhs potential emigrants at the per capita cost of Rs. 5000/- over a period of five years (2007—2012). The allocation of the State Governments will depend upon the proposals submitted by them in each financial year, subject to a ceiling of Rs. 1.00 crore per annum per State Government;

and (d) Does not arise.

Complaints against recruiting agencies

1102. SHRl C. PERUMAL: Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many complaints against recruiting agencies for overseas job opportunities received during the last year by Government are still pending and still no action has been taken on these complaints; and

(b)if so, the details of the complaints and the reasons for the delay in taking action on these complaints?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Out of the 167 complaints received against the recruiting agencies during 2006, only 8 complaints are pending for final action. These cases are pending for want of, further information from the Indian Missions, non-response of the complainants and pending court cases filed by complainants.

Indian household workers abroad

1103. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:.

(a) whether Government is planning a slew of measures for the benefit of Indians

working as household workers in foreign countries, including a fixed wage that would have to be paid to them by their employers;

if so, the details thereof;

whether Government is also proposing to establish shelters for distressed women migrants and offering legal services to ensure effective access to justice; and

if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) and (b) The following policy measures have been taken for the Indian household services workers in foreign countries:

(i) Age restriction of 30 years has been applied to all women emigrants holding ECR passports;

(ii) Compulsory attestation by Indian Missions of Employment Contract has been applied to all women emigrants with ECR passports;

(iii) A Media campaign has been launched to educate potential women emigrants;

(iv) Indian Missions in major receiving countries have been advised to establish Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC) to serve as a one-stop service outlet for emigrant workers;

(v) Regarding fixed wage for the Indian household workers abroad, minimum wages for various host countries have been fixed by the Indian Missions, which is enforced by the Protector of Emigrants while granting emigration clearance;

(c) and (d) The Indian Missions is major receiving countries have been asked to operate shelters for run-away female household service workers and to extend legal assistance to. the Indian Emigrant workers.

Funds for strengthening PRIs

1104. SHRIMATI N.R DURGA: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

whether it is a fact that his Ministry has made an assessment that it required Rs. 4,000 crores for strengthening of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in the country;

if so, the details of the assessment;

whether any assessment has been made as to how much money is required for Andhra Pradesh to revamp its PRIs; and

if so, the details thereof;

whether it is a fact that Andhra Pradesh Sarpanch Association has submitted 22 demands to him; and

if so, the details of the demands and the action that has been taken for fulfilling those demands?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) The effective implementation of Panchayati Raj requires that transfer of powers and